

Leslie Parsons

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 3

FRASER VALLEY COLLEGE
FACULTY & STAFF ASSOCIATION

newsletter

IMPORTANT: F.S.A. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE
ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14 AT 5:30 P.M. IN ROOM 104
OF THE ABBOTSFORD CAMPUS. PLEASE ATTEND

THIS EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

1. MESSAGE FROM BETTY HANAFI: OUTGOING PRESIDENT
2. MESSAGE FROM DON TUNSTALL: INCOMING PRESIDENT
3. ARTICLE BY DOUG McDOWELL ON BILL 82 AND OUR RESPONSE
TO THE BILL.
4. ANNOUNCEMENT BY SCOTT FAST - NEGOTIATIONS CHAIRMAN.

ALL OF THESE ARTICLES ARE RELEVANT TO OUR DELIBERATIONS AT
THE A.G.M.

COME PREPARED!

October 11, 1977.

Dear Member:

1976/77 has been an eventful year for our Association.

After an eight month wait, we finally received certification from the Labour Relations Board on June 14th. Because we represent almost a hundred percent of F.V.C. employees, we were disappointed to find they had decided to certify us in separate Faculty and Staff units rather than one joint one. However, time has proved that this need not affect our internal operations at all, and we have continued to stand united in all our endeavours. An even longer period of effort came to a successful conclusion on June 29th with the signing of our first collective agreement, and the negotiating team are to be congratulated on winning a contract for us which compares favourably with any other college in B.C.

As is inevitable, there were a few problems during the year but they were all matters of Association versus Administration concerns, rather than problems within the Association. Six members asked our help in problems with the Administration and, while most of them were settled at the informal level, two official grievances are presently still in process. The settlement of these matters will become more efficient as we all become more familiar with the intricacies of living within the framework of a collective agreement.

The new Colleges Act will have a major impact on us in the coming year, but until the Regulations to accompany it are made public, we won't know exactly how and when. President Don Tunstall, the incoming President, will be discussing some possible future directions for the F.S.A. at the Annual General Meeting, October 14th.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the members of this year's executive and negotiating team for their many, many hours of hard work on our behalf. Without the contribution of each one of them, the Association would not be the strong and united group it is today.

I think we can be justifiably proud of the F.S.A. and its record, and I look forward to another excellent year under the new Executive.

Respectfully submitted,

W.E. Hanafi, President,
F.V.C. Faculty and Staff
Association.

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New President's Message

I have been asked to submit a few thoughts for your perusal by way of a presidential address. Having developed an intense aversion to such tasks over the past years, I will keep it short. Let me make the following observations about the state of our association as I see it at this juncture. The Fraser Valley College Faculty and Staff Association has experienced one of the most smoothly run and quietly efficient creations in the history of organized labour in the Province of British Columbia. Thanks to the

untiring efforts of the previous two executives, and the assistance offered by a myriad of members in supporting roles, the Association is in the enviable position of being a very cohesive unit. The challenge is clearly in front of the new executive to maintain this cohesiveness and to make the appropriate adjustments to meet the new challenges facing members of the Association during this year.

It is my opinion that the Association is at a definite plateau in its development. Now that the initial trauma of birth is subsiding our immediate need is to improve our internal communication between the membership and all committees and executive members of the Association so that we can build on the firm foundations of organization already in place. To this end I want to issue a challenge to each and everyone of you to keep informed and to participate whenever possible in any way that you can. I will accept the responsibility on behalf of the executive to ensure that communication from the various committees of the Association will be forthcoming on a regular basis. Don't feel obligated to save your queries or comments to the next general meeting, we want to hear them now.

To illustrate the importance of this communications function, one need only reflect on the fact that this college will almost certainly be designated as a corporation under the new Colleges Act sometime in the new year. Our C.F.F. Director, Doug McDowell, has been working very hard to keep abreast of developments in this area and will have more to say as new information becomes available. In addition, this is the first full year of operation under a collective agreement. Since this is undoubtedly the first time for many of you to work under such an agreement, you may not be totally aware of your rights and obligations as defined by the contract. The executive is very cognizant of this need for education and information and will be organizing workshops in the very near future.

I'm getting carried away - so I'll stop there. Let me wish you good fortune for the coming year.

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CFFBC Director's Report

This report is an amalgam of CFF news, our immediate priorities regarding the College and Institutes Act, and some questions concerning where we go from here.

The Colleges and Provincial Institutes Act

- 1) First and foremost a personal reaction: ARGHHHH!!!
Now that I have that out of my system....let's go on.
- 2) Priority items:
 - A) Labour relations: we need to decide which of the three divisions we wish to vote for: Division 1 which allows us to retain our union status, Division 2 which takes us out from under the Labour Code with remuneration to be decided on a "Fair Comparison Basis" by the Minister or Division 3 which also takes us out from under the Labour Code but does allow us to bargain with the local college board about salaries and benefits. We will be forced to vote for Division 1 within 60 days of designation if we wish to remain as a union. This will likely occur during January.

If we want such a vote to be successful we must have the answers to some crucial questions. Most of these questions centre around who votes, how do they vote and what constitutes a majority vote.

- a) We need a clear definition of "professional employees" before designation. In particular, we need to know who is included as part-time, and whether or not counsellors and technicians (paraprofessionals?) are included. It seems to me that we don't want Community Education instructors included but that we do want people working a half load or more in the U.T., L.R.C., counselling, vocational or career/technical included. Perhaps we might also want people in these areas with less than half (say one-quarter to one-half) on a long term basis running back two or more years with a reasonable expectation of continuing employment.
- b) We must have a clear definition of who votes before designation. It has become clear that, at least at present, the Ministry intends to let all professional employees including administration, vote and then apply for exclusions if the vote for option 1 is successful. The unfairness of such a practice is obvious but we do need to know if the Ministry will do this and we also need to know what the exclusions would be if the vote for union status is successful.
- c) We must know how the vote will take place. Will it be via mail ballot to an official, will it be through ballots at each work place, or will it be ____? I assume that the L.R.B. will conduct the vote in its usual manner but we should ask.
- d) We need to know what percentage constitutes a majority. It should be anything over 50%.
- e) We must know what base is used to calculate a majority. If common practice as seen in all public elections and past labour votes is used it will be 50+ $\%$ of the votes cast. However, the Ministry has been silent on this crucial issue and there are some indications that we may be hit with a majority of all persons eligible to vote. The wording of the Act would certainly allow this.
- f) One last point on voting: the Act allows no option to re-enter union status if the initial vote fails. This makes the first vote extremely important. The fact that there are continuing options for leaving union status make an obvious comment on the intent of the Act.

B) Program Advisory Committee (PAC) The Ministry officials repeatedly referred to the PAC as more than a programme committee. They consistently said that it would more appropriately be called an Advisory Committee with a role in college governance, i.e. it should supply advice to the local college boards on a wide range of topics. They indicated that our present CAC was a good model to base such a PAC on because it had elected representation from a cross-section of employees and students and it talked with the local council. We need to be aware that the Ministry intends to strike provisional Academic, Vocational and Management Councils during November. They also intend to ask the local councils to discuss the form they want for a PAC and to forward all such recommendations to the Minister in November. It was stated

that the Minister was to standardize the PAC role as much as possible across the province. This means that we need to get our input into College Council fairly quickly. As chair of the CAC, I have recommended that CAC discuss this issue and provide input for College Council. I don't feel that CAC is the only route but I do think that it is an important one.

3) CFFBC Update:

The CFF met October 8th in Richmond. At this meeting the results of the Hardwick visits at each institution were reported. Many of the results were the same as we've already seen here. Much of the information consisted of what the Minister could do and what we could not do or else there were clear admissions by Ministry officials that they did not know what would happen. Most of the more immediate implications have been covered in the list of priority items seen above. But, it is worth noting that Hardwick, Sales and company sometimes gave different stories to different colleges in some cases. In particular they told one college (CNC) that the universities council could not amend any budget proposals coming from the academic council while Hardwick told us that yes, the universities council could amend academic council budget proposals - you pick the answer you like; the same split response was noticed on the question of the chance to negotiate working conditions under Division 3. Yes, the answers were given by the same people - only the date, locations and answers were different. At different colleges the faculty representatives were approached by Ministry representatives and complimented in flattering terms on the quality of their questions while being told how reasonable they were compared to some of those other colleges. My, my, the things that do come out when we get a chance to compare notes.. During the reports each college representative indicated their support for continued union status under Division 1. It was also agreed that Division 2 provided no protection and no leverage on a provincial basis and none on a local basis either, unless all of the Minister, the administration, the college board and the professional staff agree to it. (In fact, during the Ministry visits of September 30th, Soles repeated Dr. McGeer's claim that the unions were picked by default and that the new Act provides real alternatives for faculty. When questioned as to what was added by Divisions 2 and 3, Soles replied that "Division 2 allows faculty to obtain governance and managerial input which could not be gained in collective bargaining at some colleges." There was no reply from Ministry officials when it was pointed out that any college blessed with such "bad hat" administration would not be very likely to agree to faculty participation and hence block any such efforts under Division 2. In Division 3, the non-union association may only bargain for benefits and grievances concerning the same unless the Minister agrees in writing (not too likely methinks). Neither Division 2 nor Division 3 allow the strong grievance procedures presently available under the Labour Code (we would maintain these along with union status). The reports also stressed the point that the Act provides no option for unionization once the initial vote is missed or lost. (By this time the preference for Division 1 is probably more feasible to you.)

After the reports, the meeting began to discuss CFFBC plans for the next few months. It was clear that Division 1 was the unanimous choice. However, since it was also

clear that the government is setting up the machinery to collect and analyse data and to co-ordinate collective bargaining on a provincial basis for all public sector employees (that's us folks), the meeting also discussed the fact that more power has been centralized in the Minister's hands. There was common agreement to the fact that small individual unions will have a hard time of it. They will not have the necessary research and staff functions to deal effectively with the government and just as important, they will not have the numbers to effectively use a withdrawal of services. One by one the individual unions can be easily handled by the government. Because of this the CFFBC passed a motion to begin immediate consideration of various provincial union models and to look at the pros and cons of the entire question. This motion also asked that this development and discussion occur at both the local and CFFBC levels and that CFFBC consult with all groups representing professional staff at B.C. Colleges and Institutes. It became obvious that although most representatives felt that the government was forcing them towards a provincial union it was too early to opt for a provincial union at present. They felt that there was no need to build such a structure before designation occurs in January. This could be a serious mistake because the Act is silent on whether such a union must exist before designation if we are to join it. (Don't forget - we are presently allowed just one shot at union status and that is within 60 days of designation.) It may well be the case that whatever union structure is initially joined will be the only one allowed for a indefinite time.

Perhaps this is an appropriate time to look at some possible provincial union structures:

- 1) Provincial Federation of Unions: Each association forms a local union at its institution. This local is responsible for all bargaining, etc. The locals join together in a loose Federation which has no power or money except for what is given to it by a local. This is similar to CFFBC.
- 2) Provincial Union with locals and two tier bargaining
There is a provincial union with locals at each institution. The provincial union bargains for salaries, provides research and organizational staff, etc., lobbys in Victoria, etc. The locals bargain for working conditions, etc. The provincial group consists of paid staff and elected executives from the locals. The provincial body is funded by a flat fee collected from each local on a per capita basis while the locals set and collect their own fees.
- 3) Provincial Union with no locals:
There is one provincial union with no locals, i.e. there are no local union groups and no local bargaining. Such a structure is unattractive to me but it does provide a large and unified bargaining group for all matters under negotiation.

These are just a few of the possibilities and should serve to give some ideas of the range of options allowed by a provincial union.

What I would like from you people at the meeting is some sense of whether you feel we need to investigate various provincial union models and their implications. If so, I would hope that you direct the FSA to obtain such information for discussion here and at the CFFBC level and to discuss them with the different colleges and institutions. I would also like to bring out representatives from various unions to talk with faculty and staff to explain their structures and what they might offer us. We are all at the crossroads and we need information. Now!

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NEGOTIATIONS

It is time to form the contract committee for the preparation and negotiation of the 1978-79 collective agreement. The contract committee will be composed of all interested FSA members with the single condition that there be at least one member from each of the following areas: west campus staff; east campus staff; non-clerical staff; university transfer faculty; career-technical faculty; vocational faculty; non-teaching faculty.

While the negotiating team will be drawn from the contract committee, participation on the contract committee implies no obligation to serve on the negotiating team. Contract committee activity will likely take the following course:

- analysis of existing contract with previous negotiating team
- meetings with each area to determine problems and inadequacies in existing contract
- establishment of contract committee priorities
- research and preparation of specific clauses
- rewriting of inadequate existing clauses
- presentation to FSA membership
- formation of negotiating team
- negotiation of contract with college council

I heartily encourage FSA members with interest in any portion of the contract to join in the work of the contract committee. Furthermore, all FSA members should be prepared to share their experience of the existing contract with us and voice their concerns.

Please indicate your interest in the contract committee to me by the Annual General Meeting of the FSA on Friday, October 14th.

Sincerely,

Scott Fast
East Campus
Local 57

AGENDA FOR A.G.M.

- ✓ 1. Minutes
- ✓ 2. President's Report
- ✓ 3. Treasurer's Report
- ✓ 4. Contract and Agreement Committees' Reports
- ✓ 5. Membership Committee Report
- ✓ 6. P.D. Committee Report
- ✓ 7. Constitutional Revisions
- ✓ 8. Ratification of elections held on 25 August 1977 and change of executive
- 9. Future directions:
 - 1) Faculty (Don)
 - 2) Staff (Leslie)
 - 3) C.F.F. (Doug)